

VZCZCXRO6501
PP RUEHDT RUEHTRO
DE RUEHC #9027/01 2950243
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P R 220017Z OCT 09
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 8281
INFO UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
RUEHDT/AMEMBASSY DILI 5970

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 STATE 109027

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [UNSC](#) [KPKO](#) [TT](#)

SUBJECT: UNMIT UN SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE REMARKS, OCTOBER 23, 2009

¶1. This is an action request, see paragraph 2.

¶2. Summary and action request: On October 23, 2009, the UN Security Council will hold a debate on the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). The Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for UNMIT, Atul Khare, will brief the UN Security Council on major developments in Timor-Leste between February-September 2009, drawing upon the October 2, 2009 Report of the Secretary-General on UNMIT. This debate provides an opportunity to recognize the commitment of the people of Timor-Leste on the tenth anniversary of the popular consultation, and to comment on the key benchmarks of the four mandated priority areas of the Medium Term Strategy of UNMIT. These areas include: (1.) ensuring security and stability; (2.) rule of law, justice, and human rights; (3.) culture of democratic governance and dialogue; and (4.) socio-economic development. USUN should draw upon the draft remarks in paragraph 3 below, as appropriate, during the debate.

¶3. Begin points.

- Although stability remains fragile, the security situation in Timor-Leste has improved dramatically since the political crises and violence in 2006, 2007, and early 2008. We congratulate the Timorese people for their accomplishments and we wished them well as they celebrated the tenth anniversary of the popular consultation on August 30. Clearly, in partnership with the international police and peacekeepers, the Timorese are on the right track.
-I would like to make four points regarding the priority areas of the Medium Term Strategy of UNMIT.
-First, regarding security and stability: we recognize the progress in developing national security legislation and a national security policy. We have witnessed increased professionalization of the Timorese police and military, and delineation of their respective roles. This is evidenced by their assistance in the management of security following the February 2008 assassination attempts on the President and Prime Minister. We are pleased with the recent transfer of policing responsibilities in three districts and in the Police Training Center from UNMIT to the Timorese national police. We expect to see further improvements with increased emphasis on strategic and long-term planning. Overall, the hard work and dedication of bilateral donors has been critical to success in this area.
-Second, regarding rule of law, justice, and human rights: the progress we have seen in strengthening the judicial system must be accompanied by strong action against a persistent culture of impunity. The leadership in Timor-Leste must continue to pursue accountability for criminal offenses committed during the 2006 crisis. Without strong action against impunity, the Timorese will be unable to build a lasting foundation for stability and security. To this end, we note the recent completion of an independent needs assessment of the justice sector, and encourage all partners to heed its recommendations.
-Third, regarding democratic governance and dialogue: we congratulate the Timorese for the completion of peaceful

local elections, and commend UNMIT for supporting this process. We welcome President Ramos-Horta's initiative to open a broad dialogue with the Timorese people on priority issues. The independence and responsiveness of the judiciary is a critical element for democratic governance. We therefore urge the Government of Timor-Leste to continue its administrative reforms, including the development of legislative frameworks and a strategic plan for the justice sector that also establish a system of accountability for criminal offenses.

-Fourth, regarding socio-economic development: the United States is encouraged by the closing of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps, and also by the safe return and resettlement of these persons. We strongly encourage the continuation of projects aimed at social cohesion and prevention of renewed conflict. Additionally, we acknowledge progress in addressing the national priorities of the International Compact for Timor-Leste, and the measures being taken by the Government of Timor-Leste to improve access to primary education, to decrease malnutrition, to raise employment levels, and to increase child protection. It is critical that Timorese leadership continue to focus on programs and policies that reduce poverty and enhance rural development.

-Finally, the United States would like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Atul Khare, for his dedication and efforts to the advancement of peace in

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Timor-Leste, as well as the commitment and hard work of the UNMIT staff who serve alongside him.

End points.

CLINTON